

# **ASIA PACIFIC CHANNELS**

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE: ASIA PACIFIC CENTER  
1999 No.2/June**

**2000 Feet: A Celebration of World Dance  
Philadelphia, USA  
June 19-26, 1999  
including  
WDA Third Global Assembly  
June 19-21  
1999**

# WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE: ASIA PACIFIC CENTER

C/O JAPAN WOMEN'S COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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## WDA:APC PRESIDENT'S PAGE

### Discourse on Traditional Performing Arts

In Wakasa, Fukui Prefecture, there is a folk art, "Oh no Mai" (Dance of King) that prays to the god of rice paddies for productiveness. It was born from the long agricultural history. Now, however, there is a nuclear power station in the area and many performers of the folklore are now employed by the electric power company. If generations that do not actually experience cultivation continue, it is predicted that the meaning of the folklore will gradually change. Throughout Japan, there are various kinds of folk entertainment that use cows and horses effectively. Now that automobiles are used for transportation instead, such performances are presented with borrowed cows and horses for preservation of the performing art. They might become extinct if they just count on support from the government. The tradition of local people, whose living environment has already changed, will become a museum piece if no new creativity is added to it, and lose its life.

In Hokkaido, the northern island of Japan, there is a famous song, "Soran-Bushi", about a catch of herring. Since it does not accompany dance, a new dance school based in Kyushu, the southern island, adopted the movements of "Yosakoi-Odori", a folklore dance in the Shikoku Island, to provide choreography for the song in 1995. The dance in the south and the song in the north have been dynamically blended with imagination and creativity into "Yosakoi Soran-Bushi" — the folklore event held in Sapporo, Hokkaido, which has attracted 1.5 million viewers. In the future "Yosakoi-Odori", originated in the Shikoku Island, may become a traditional dance of Hokkaido. Folklore should be considered in terms of preservation of tradition as well as a living thing.

Since the 1970s, traffic had been regulated on some streets on Sundays and holidays to provide vehicle-free promenades in Tokyo. Street performers used to give performances on such promenades. However, two years ago, this regulation of traffic was abolished. Accordingly street performers have disappeared. On the other hand, the suburbs of Tokyo began to be enthusiastic about summer festivals. The local governments accept public participation and support the events. In Asaka, a garrison town of the Self-Defense Force, SDF officials created a marching dance, which came to the attention of the people. Such invitations of public participation draw the people who used to give street performances to the events and dance has become popular as a new attraction. Many of the dances are hip-hop performances fused with traditional small props and costumes, which gives a rather weird impression sometimes, but their originality should be valued as much as the preservation of tradition.

Folklore itself has life, which means there exist birth and death, and fusion and purification. Enforcing laws to stabilize traditional performing arts too strictly will have negative effects. Regardless of times, it is required that tradition always be treated with creativity and originality.

**MIKI WAKAMATSU**

First Announcement



Celebrating the Millennium

**CHOREOGRAPHY TODAY**  
Conference and Festival  
22 July -5 August 2000  
Seoul, Shanghai, Tokyo,  
A World Dance Alliance Project

**SCHEDULE**

**||||| Seoul, Korea : 22-26 July**

22 Jul (Sat): Daytime: Travel to Seoul  
Evening: Opening Ceremony and Gala  
23-26 Jul: Festival and Conference Events

**||||| Shanghai, China : 27-31 July**

27 Jul (Thu): Daytime: Travel to Shanghai  
Evening: Opening Ceremony & Final Gala for  
The Tao Li Bei National Dance Competition  
28-31 Jul: Festival and Conference Events

**||||| Tokyo, Japan : 1-5 August**

1 Aug (Tue): Daytime: Travel to Tokyo  
Evening: Opening Ceremony and Gala  
2-5 Aug: Festival and Conference Events

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**A World Dance Alliance Project**

The mission of the World Dance Alliance is to serve as a voice and support group for dance worldwide. The World Dance Alliance is an independent, non-profit, non-political, non-religious organization. Its membership is open to all individuals interested in dance regardless of gender or national origin.

**To : WDA CHOREOGRAPHY TODAY SECRETARIAT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SEND ME A BROCHURE ON THE WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE PROJECT  
"CHOREOGRAPHY TODAY" WHICH IS THE SECOND YEAR OF THE THREE YEAR  
GLOBAL EVENT "WORLD DANCE 2000: CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM."

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

World Dance Alliance, Choreography Today Secretariat  
29-24-701 Sakuragaoka-Cho,  
Shibuya-ku Tokyo 150-0031 Japan  
TEL: 813-5458-0548 FAX: 813-5458-0547  
E-MAIL: mayumi-n@mx.meshnet.or.jp

## To All WDA Asia Pacific Members

The WD 2000 Executive Committee will present "World Dance (WD) 2000" from July 31 through August 5, 2000 in Tokyo, to commemorate the millennium.

We are seeking candidates for our project: "Next Wave—Dance Showcase by the Excellent Young Artists in Asia-Pacific". It is a part of the WDA 2000 event. About 20 promising dance artists/companies that are expected to become active in the 21st century will be selected from all parts of Asia-Pacific.

This innovative project, which will be promotional to the Asia-Pacific and European/American markets will start with WD 2000, and be continued as an annual event in the future.

We would like to ask you to recommend artists in your country whom you consider suitable for this project (as many as you wish to recommend) by sending us their informational materials including videos (of excerpts of some works, if possible) along with your letters of recommendation.

Either you or the artists can send materials to us.

Please mark "WD 2000/Asia-Pacific Next Wave". Details including financial conditions about this project are being discussed now.

The first closing date for our acceptance of the materials is May 31, 1999. However we will begin accepting applications later than that date if we do not receive sufficient applications in the first round.

Please send the letters of recommendation and informational materials to: Choreography Today Secretariat,  
29-24-701 Sakuragaoka-Cho, Shibuya-ku  
Tokyo 150-0031 Japan  
Tel 813-5458-0548 Fax 813-5458-0547  
email [an\\_cre@mub.biglobe.ne.jp](mailto:an_cre@mub.biglobe.ne.jp)  
[mikiw@jwcpe.ac.jp](mailto:mikiw@jwcpe.ac.jp)

The WD 2000 Executive Committee  
Miki Wakamatsu and Mayumi Nagatoshi

*Note that each choreographer may use two dancers only as stage space is limited*



## THE WDA ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW CENTURY

As the whole world approaches the threshold of a new Century, indeed, of a new Millennium, there is a general trend to reflect on the past, evaluate the present, and speculate about the future. The World Dance Alliance has been doing the same with its three year global project "World Dance 2000: Celebrating the Millennium."

The first year of that project will be the "2000 FEET" event, looking at the past and our Dance Heritage, to be held in Philadelphia 19-26 June this year. The second year will be the CHOREOGRAPHY TODAY event, looking at the present and at the creative power of dance, to be held in Seoul, Shanghai and Tokyo in 2000. The final year will be

the WORLD DANCE EDUCATION event, looking to create a vision for the future, to be held in Europe in 2002, now planned for a year later than the original proposal of 2001. But that will give the WDA Asia Pacific Center time to have a Regional Event in that year, 2001.

As we reach this Millennium threshold, perhaps it is time to look again at the mission of the World Dance Alliance and to re-dedicate ourselves to its primary goals. Let me share with you what I believe these are:

### **1 Service to the Field**

The basic overall goal of the World Dance Alliance is to be a service organization. Even though members are interested in all aspects of the field – education, artistry, scholarship – the WDA does not aim to duplicate the work of organizations already existing in these areas. The WDA is like an international task force that goes in where needed to lend support (non-financial) to help individuals or groups realize their goals. Service is not a particularly glamorous endeavour for any field but there are fortunately enough people in the world who derive fulfilment from helping others. This seems to be one of the primary motivations for joining the WDA.

### **2 Communication and Networking**

One of the original reasons for starting the WDA was to facilitate communication among dancers worldwide. So much dance is happening everywhere at this time in history and much of it goes unnoticed in some parts of the world. Moreover, we are reaping the benefits, and some of the problems, of modern technology – primarily international air travel and the Internet. The latter has given us the means to be able to communicate and to network with other dancers not only in every part of the world but at a speed unheard of in the past. The WDA, through its Regional Centers and National Chapters, can help to facilitate this development.

### **3 Information Navigation**

One of the major benefits of the Internet is the access to an incredible amount of information, more than any one person can absorb in a life time. Because of this complexity, the WDA hopes to assist in navigating the Internet so that dancers can find the information and sources that are appropriate for their individual needs.

### **4 Advocacy for the Field**

A phrase that is often used in the WDA Mission statement is that it is a “voice for dance”. There are many issues in the dance world with different focuses in different areas of the geographical world, but there are also some issues that seem to be universal for dancers everywhere. The WDA, at its 3rd Global Assembly in Philadelphia will hold several Forums to discuss Advocacy Issues that will become a platform the “WDA Voice”.

### **5 Awareness and Consciousness**

Advocacy issues by their nature attack the problems in the field. The WDA would also like to help create a global awareness that there are positive aspects of the dance field. It is alive and well in many parts of the world; it is an essential part of a civilized life; and it can contribute to the physical and psychological health not only of individuals but of entire communities.

Through dance, the WDA will champion the ideal of the beauty and the necessity of human diversity which should not be a source of intolerance and hate, but rather a source of joy and celebration. We have only just begun to explore the possibilities and the contributions that dancers can make toward a more peaceful planet.

As we cross the threshold into the new century, let us all begin to think more deeply about how we as dancers can not only contribute to the development and raising of standards in the field, but also to the creation of a safer and saner global atmosphere of mutual cooperation and encouragement.

Several philosophers from different ages and cultures have made a similar observation: Real happiness comes when you are helping others in the thing that you know how to do best. In the new millennium, let's develop a WDA that will be a rallying point for these goals and for the acceptance of dance as a primary human activity that brings health, happiness, and community cooperation.

**Carl Wolz**  
Executive Director, WDA International





## Australia Chapter Report from Ausdance

### Professional dance news

Garry Stewart has been announced as the new artistic director of Australian Dance Theatre, replacing Meryl Tankard, who has left the company after six years and is now working as a freelance choreographer in Europe. It is understood she is discussing her possible participation in some of the cultural events surrounding the opening ceremony for the 2000 Olympics, along with other Australian choreographers such as Lloyd Newson (DV8) and Dein Perry ('Tap Dogs').

Garry Stewart is one of a number of younger choreographers to emerge in the last decade, including Gideon Obarzanek, Natalie Weir, Stephen Page, Stanton Welch, Stephen Baynes and Paige Gordon. The Australia Council's emerging choreographers' initiative has also identified a number of younger artists who have been given grants of up to \$20,000 to pursue a particular project. This program is now in its second year, and the initiative – administered by Ausdance – will shortly announce a new group of emerging choreographers' grants. Young people are encouraged to submit ideas for projects which will have long-term benefits for their development as choreographers. They must be within the first five years of their professional

choreographic practice to be eligible for the initiative.

### The International Year of the Older Person

This was celebrated in the current edition of *Dance Forum* with a range of articles about dance in the community, professional dance and healthy aging for the professional dancer. The cover features Elizabeth Cameron Dalman, the founder of Australian Dance Theatre (1965), who is now in her sixties and still performing, directing and touring from her Creative Arts Centre 'Mirramu', just outside Canberra.

### Nugent Inquiry into the Performing Arts

The National Executive Officers spent a fruitful hour with Federal Arts Minister Peter McGauran on 1 April, where he was given a full briefing about Ausdance and its activities and projects. There were opportunities to discuss industry issues, and discussion about Ausdance's submission to the Nugent Inquiry into the Performing Arts, which has received more than 500 submissions. The inquiry is looking at the financial viability and artistic vitality of, and continued access to, the nation's major subsidised arts companies. It is due to issue a discussion paper in July and a final report in August or September. Ausdance's submission highlighted the loss of small companies – integral to the development of dancers and choreographers in a three tier system of large companies, smaller companies and independent practice.

### Australian Research Council funds 'Unspoken Knowledges'

In an important first for Australian dance, the Australian Research Council, through its Strategic

Partnerships with Industry – Research and Training Scheme, has funded a number of key dance and academic organisations to research the choreographic process. The ARC has granted an amount of \$180,000 over three years to the University of Melbourne and industry partners the Choreographic Centre in Canberra, and the Australian Dance Council (Ausdance). Other partners include Dr Kate Stevens from the Macarthur Auditory Cognition Laboratory at UWS; Professor Sue Street, Head of Dance at QUT, and Mr David Worrall, Director of the Australian Centre for Arts and Technology at ANU.

Professor Shirley McKechnie, the research team leader, and her co-chief investigator, Robin Grove of the University of Melbourne, are former dancers and choreographers who are now best known for their contributions to dance writing and scholarship. The research will be studio-based, with the work of choreographers and their dancers as the focus of the project. The research will undertake, for the first time, 'a systematic investigation of the sensory, motor and cognitive skills used to devise and develop choreographic compositions, and the modes of publication in which these can be adequately represented, documented and analysed'. Choreographer Sue Healey will be an associate investigator, and Anna Smith will be the research associate for the project.

At the core of the proposed research are three fundamental questions:

- What is the nature of the mental representations which choreographers construct in

- How might this knowledge be used to make a positive difference to choreographic practice and outcomes for the dance industry?

National Executive Officer Julie Dyson spent time in Melbourne in April and May discussing the general directions of this project and Ausdance's role of disseminating information via an electronic journal as the process unfolds.

### **Australian Youth Dance Festival**

A comprehensive program has been devised, with artists such as Chrissie Parrott, Beth Shelton, Tim Newth, Carol Wellman and Cheryl Stock, as well as elders and songmen from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, prominent emerging artists, health professionals, writers and computer experts all converging on Townsville to make this a very special festival. Registrations close on June 21.

### **Australian Dance Week**

The Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Peter McGauran, launched Australian Dance Week in Sydney at Darling Harbour on Saturday 24 April. ABC-TV's *Sunday-Afternoon* on April 25 and *The Arts Show* on April 26 focused on dance, as did Radio National's *The Arts Today*

on International Dance Day (April 29). Australian Dance Week was celebrated in every State and Territory and included professional performances, forums, and high profile public dance events such as 'Streets of Dance' throughout the City of Sydney.

### **Safe Dance III**

The Arts Minister also launched this landmark study during Australian Dance Week, and made a separate media release from his office about its significance to the dance profession. *The Australian* ran a feature article on the findings of Safe Dance III in its 'Arts on Friday' supplement on April 23. Both author Debra Crookshanks and editor Hilary Trotter were guests at the launch of the report. The report is available from the Ausdance National Secretariat for \$40 (Australian), or all three Safe Dance Reports for \$90. Email [ausdance.national@anu.edu.au](mailto:ausdance.national@anu.edu.au) for further details, or fax +61 2 6247-4701.

### **Indigenous project**

Ausdance and the National Aboriginal Dance Council of Australia (NADCA) will work with six young indigenous artists at the Australian Youth Dance Festival to develop new strategies for communication between the organisations. A further period of

exchange will follow with NADCA continuing the communication in the lead-up to the National Aboriginal Dance Conference to be held in Sydney from 18–21 November 1999, where the indigenous artists will be brought together again to strengthen ties and continue the liaison work. The initiative is being funded by the Dance Fund of the Australia Council.

### **ArtsPeak**

National arts service organisations have agreed to form a confederation called ArtsPeak, which will come together not only at crisis times (e.g. the tax debate), but will work together for the arts industry, with a range of ideas and suggestions now being considered for implementation. The group is diverse and represents those organisations dedicated to serving the arts in Australia. At this stage there is no funding and all work undertaken for the arts industry will be in addition to existing workloads.

**Julie Dyson**



### **Australian Youth Dance Festival Townsville, Queensland June 27–July 2, 1999**

- work with established artists –
- meet Australia's emerging choreographers –
- national and international performers –
- classes, workshops, forums and FUN –

Information and registration forms available on the website:  
<http://ausdance.anu.edu.au/youth>



**3<sup>rd</sup> NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DANCE CONFERENCE**  
**Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, NSW**  
**Thursday – Sunday, 18–21 November 1999**

**The National Aboriginal Dance Council Australia (NADCA) invites you to participate in its third national conference, an indigenous dance gathering.**

The conference is open to anyone currently involved in or interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance performance, management and education.

The conference will facilitate networking between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancers, dance groups and educators on a national level and contribute to the preservation and future development of Indigenous dance in Australia.

The conference will run four days, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day, featuring: workshops and presentations on copyright, audience development, marketing and training; guest speakers and workshops with professional arts and education industry specialists; forums and planning sessions; working groups to document policies and write guidelines relevant to dance education and curriculum development and copyright and cultural protocols for dance; performances of Aboriginal Traditional and



contemporary dance; masterclasses and workshops in traditional and contemporary dance.

The conference will also be linked to the Powerhouse Museum's public performance program, featuring daily performances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music and dance in the Museum's Turbine Gallery by participating artists attending the conference.

If you would like further information or are interested in presenting a paper, performing at the conference or conducting a workshop, please contact:  
 National Aboriginal Dance Council Australia (NADCA)  
 Conference Organiser,  
 3rd National Aboriginal Dance Conference,  
 PO Box 1093, Strawberry Hills  
 NSW 2012 Australia  
 PH: (02) 9699 3765, (02) 9699 2171  
 FAX: (02) 9310 2643

**BROLGA — an Australian journal about dance**

This journal is committed to providing a space for the publication of current research, critical thinking and creative activities relating to, and impinging on, dance in a cultural context in Australia and elsewhere.

*Brolga* is indexed in its entirety in *Index to Dance Periodicals* published in hard copy for the New York Public Library's Dance Collection by G. K. Hall/Macmillan Library Reference. This indexing is also available via the online catalog of the Research Libraries, New York Public Library at: <http://www.nypl.org/catalogs/catalogs.html> (via telnet: [nyplgate.nypl.org](http://nyplgate.nypl.org)). *Brolga* is also indexed selectively by APAIS (Australian Public Affairs Information Service) available from Ozline, on AUSTROM and in print.

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The Editor, *Brolga*  
 43 Holden Crescent, Wanniasa ACT 2903 AUSTRALIA  
 email: [mpotter@pcug.org.au](mailto:mpotter@pcug.org.au)

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**The *brolga* is an Australian native bird renowned for its dramatic displays of dancing. These displays have been a constant inspiration to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians working in the arts**

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## Hong Kong Chapter Report from Hong Kong Dance Alliance

The Hong Kong Dance Alliance has enjoyed a productive period. Since my last reporting we have received a HK\$500,000 grant from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and a HK\$200,000 grant from Phillip Morris Asia Limited in support of projects beginning in March 1999 for the fiscal year ending April 2000.

The first of these projects under way is the publication of a periodical *Dance Journal/HK*. This is a compilation of reviews of our member groups published in other print and electronic mass media; critiques of member groups by one of our 14 contributing writers; an events calendar; and, editorials and articles by members of the editorial board.

Our second project this year is a series of six concerts over 17 evenings featuring 19 member groups and individuals.

Our membership roll has climbed to include over 30 groups and an equal number of individual members.

The third and fourth projects this year will be a Dance Education Workshop and a Dance Critics' Workshop.

The final project for which we have received support is the production of a film of Hong Kong Dance and Dancemakers '98, which will be a compilation of excerpts of members' works and interviews with the choreographers.

This year the Hong Kong Dance Alliance will hold a Gala evening in which we will present our first Annual Dance Awards for outstanding Achievements and Contributions to Hong Kong Dance.

This summer a number of our members will be performing at the 2000 Feet festival in Philadelphia, including:

- Dance HK/NY, directed by Rosalind Newman;
- DanceArt Hong Kong, directed by Andy Wong and Francis Leung; and
- A group of Modern Dance and Musical Theatre Dance majors from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

Also invited, but unable to attend because of conflicting engagements (the first in Israel, the second in Hong Kong):

- The City Contemporary Dance Company, and
- Mui Cheuk Yin.

**Tom Brown**

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## Japan Chapter Report

### Choreography and Copyright

This important issue is occupying our attention in Japan at the moment, as we plan the 'Choreography Today' Conference and Festival to

celebrate the new millenium in Tokyo.

In November 1998 a trial concerning choreographic copyright that attracted considerable attention of the public was concluded. Russian dancer Farukh Ruzimatov had performed a work by Maurice Béjart at his performance in Tokyo without the consent of the choreographer. Béjart claimed damages against Ruzimatov and won the case. At the trial the copyright of the choreography – whether it was choreographed by Ruzimatov or Béjart – was disputed.

In order to discuss the issue of choreography that is invisible, it is necessary to fix it by a medium that is visible. Béjart presented video recordings to compare the choreography of the two artists and proved their works to be very similar. This evidence having been considered, the compensation for damages was assessed based on the earnings of the performance: 300,000 yen (US\$2,600).

What, then, should we do, if there is no evidence by a recording medium such as video? If some movements in a work originate from ballet or folk dance, should these parts be considered separately? What about plagiarism of ideas? The most important thing is, if assessment of damages is to be decided on the basis of the profits of a given



performance, the amount awarded could be very small indeed.

In Asia, copyrights of performing arts are considered as properties of the region as a whole; the concept of personal property rights has not yet been developed. If we apply the concept of copyright as established in the West, we have to face some contradictions. For example, suppose a British company, "A", uses a pattern of Indonesian art to make wallpaper and puts the product on the market and becomes successful. The people in Indonesia who created the original pattern do not receive profits from the copyright even if the wallpaper sells well. But if the pattern is registered in the United Kingdom and companies other than Company "A" try to copy it, it will be an infringement of copyright of Company "A" in Great Britain.

Even if a contemporary dance artist in the USA, for example, incorporates Asian dance techniques into his/her works, he/she will not be accused of stealing the techniques. But if American contemporary dance techniques are adopted, such imitating acts will probably be condemned.

Choreographic copyrights have been argued from the standpoints of regional cultural heritage vs. personal intellectual property. In addition, cultural copying by multimedia is causing a stir in this argument now. "Editing" has been adopted and established as a modern method in choreography also; it should be discussed in consideration for a great variety of cultural phenomena.

**Miki Wakamatsu**



## Korea Chapter Report from Korea Dance Alliance

### Choreography Workshop

Korea Dance Alliance held the first Choreography Workshop in February, inviting Japanese choreographer Ishii Kaoru. The workshop ran for five days and was well received by the participants. This choreography workshop will be held annually in February to teach the basic principles and technique of choreography to people who are interested in making dance.

### Academic Conference and The Korean Journal of Dance Studies

The second academic conference was scheduled to be held in May. The third issue of *The Korean Journal of Dance Studies* and spring newsletter will also be published in May. *The Korean Journal of Dance Studies* is published twice a year, in spring and fall. The fall edition is bilingual (Korean and English) and will be published in December. Members of World Dance Alliance who want to submit a manuscript should send two copies about their own research written in English. An abstract and a short C.V., to be translated into Korean, should accompany manuscripts (less than 15 pages). If any member wants to subscribe to *The Korean Journal of Dance Studies* (English version), please contact us at the following address:

Korea Dance Alliance (Miss. Yu-Jeen Chung), The Korean National University of Arts Dance School, #203 San 14-67, Jangchung-dong 2 Ga, Jung-ku, Seoul 100-392, Korea  
Fax: 82-2-2263-3209

### Participation in 2000FEET: A Celebration World Dance, Philadelphia

Several members of the Korea Dance Alliance are scheduled to attend '2000 FEET: A Celebration of World Dance' in Philadelphia from June 19-25. Members will attend the World Dance Alliance Global Assembly and nine Korean dance companies will appear to perform at the festival. The companies are listed as follows:

- Chang Chung-Yoon Modern Dance Group Title: *Prime Time*, choreographer: Chung-Yoon Chang (a member of the board of directors);
- Jigu Dance Theater Title: *Sharing 1*, choreographer: Insook Park (Vice-president);
- Kui-In Chung Dance Company Title: *Kut 99*, choreographer: Kui-In Chung (a member of the board of directors);
- Kim Un Mi Dance Company Title: *Poo Rye*, choreographer: Un Mi Kim (a member of the board of directors);
- Myoung Sook Kim Dance Company Title: *Saedongnomo (Beyond Saek-dong)*, choreographer: Myoung Sook Kim (a member of the board of directors);
- KNUA Dance Company Title: *Pas de Quatre*, coach: Hae Shik Kim (President);
- KNUA Dance Company Title: *Chindo Puk Chum* (Drum Dance) Taepyongmu, choreographer: Seung Hee Chung Professor of Korean National University of Arts);

- Jigu Dance Theater Title: *Toy in the mirror as seen just externally*, choreographer: Kyung Mo Kang;
- Nayoung Kim Dance Company Title: *Scarecrow*, choreographer: Nayoung Kim.
- Seoul Metropolitan Dance Theater has been invited to perform *Wandering Spirit*, choreographed by Ms. Jung Hae Bae.

### Performance 'Dance Meets Fashion'

This event is an annual performance of Korea Dance Alliance since 1996. This is the third series, scheduled to be held in November. The performance will fuse into state-of-the-art computer technology that will create a new performance style towards the 21st Century, along with oriental and western style opera music.

### Other News

The Korea Chapter's national delegate has been changed from Mr. Hyun Choi to Ms. Malborg Kim, who is the Executive Director of Korea Dance Alliance at present. Former national delegate Mr. Choi is currently the honorary president of Korea Dance Alliance.

Ms. Haeree Choi, the Assistant Executive Director, has resigned from the office. Miss. Yu-Jeen Chung is the new secretary for international liaison for the Korea Dance Alliance and Miss. Ji Hyun Han deals with domestic affairs.

### Yu-Jeen Chung

## Malaysia Chapter Report from MyDance

MyDance, WDA Malaysia Chapter has been productive because the individual members have been very active in the first half of this

# MYDANCE WDA MALAYSIA CHAPTER

year. Among the dance performances that have taken place are:

1. AWAS! — a contemporary Malaysian dance experience choreographed by Joseph Gonzales at the Experimental Theatre in March. This was performed by the students of the dance department of the National Arts Academy, Ministry of Culture Arts and Tourism.

2. DARIWUNYAM — a performance of numerous dance companies in Malaysia featuring Nyoba and Dancers, RiverGrass Dance Theatre, Romo Productions, Khazanah Dance Creations, Penang Dance Station, Shakti Dances and Dua Space Dance Theatre. The performance was held from 1st to 4th April.

3. Marion & Dancers and Shakti Dances will present Playground from the 6th to 9th May at the Experimental Theatre.

Dr. Anis is currently on a research project which will take him well into the year 2001. It is on the Kulintangan dance and music of Borneo. Mew Chang Tsing, a lecturer at the National Arts Academy and Artistic Director of RiverGrass Dance Theatre will spend a great deal of time in Seattle on an artist exchange program organized by the NorthWest Asian American Theatre. Suhaimi Magi has also

received a grant from the International Foundation for Arts and Culture to pursue a project in Australia. He will probably conduct workshops at the Victoria College of the Arts.

The WDA Malaysia Chapter plans to meet in the near future to discuss the direction we need to take and possibly to elect a new committee.

**Joseph Gonzales**

## TARI 2000 — TAKING CONTEMPORARY DANCE INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

The National Arts Academy, Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Malaysia will be organizing this Festival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from the 6th–12th June 2000. This is the 4th Festival in the series that began in 1994. This Festival will be held on a grand scale to include seminars, workshops, showcase performances and main performances in the evening.

We are inviting solo artists, dance companies and dance scholars to participate in this event, which will be held at a few venues in Kuala Lumpur including the glorious new National Theatre. Please send your CVs, portfolios, video tapes and other relevant material to the organizers at the address given below before 31st August 1999.

*For further information, please write to:*

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# Philippines

## Philippines Chapter Report

### CELEBRATIONS AND CONTROVERSIES

At and after the WDA-Asia Pacific conference and festival in Manila in August 1998, hundreds became members of WDA-Philippines (some as joint members with the Philippine chapter of the Committee on International Festivals on Folklore or CIOFF-Philippines) throughout the islands.

Reorganized before that event by Nestor Jardin (then artistic director of the Cultural Center of the Philippines), WDA-Philippines set up a board of directors with the following officers: Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz, president; Corazon C. Inigo, vice-president; Shirley Halili Cruz, secretary; Prosperidad Arandez, treasurer; and Larry Gabao, public relations officer.

Many members have expressed their plans to attend the WDA event at the '2000 Feet' gathering in Philadelphia in June. The Philippines will present papers from Patrick Alcedo of University of California-Riverside, and Villaruz of the University of the Philippines.

Inigo, Cruz, Gabao and Villaruz were also involved in the organization of the 26-27 April National Dance Conference and Workshop of the Dance Committee of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). Close assistance

came from Teresta Salvador as co-chair for the conference with Inigo, and Vella Damian who set up the gala for the International Dance Day with Cruz. Both events were held at the University of the Philippines Theater in Quezon City. The theme was "Dance Education in Year 2000 and Beyond," with Senator Raul Roco as keynote speaker.

Meant to coincide with the worldwide celebration of UNESCO's International Dance Day, these annual NCCA affairs are now main features of the National Dance Week as proclaimed by President Fidel V. Ramos in 1993.

Another cause for celebration was the 50th anniversary of the Philippine Folk Dance Society. Organized by the late national artist Francisca Reyes Aquino, it now holds its own annual summer (in May) workshops at the Folk Arts Theater in Manila. Leading the organizers was PFDS president Larry Gabao.

Still other causes for congratulation were two competitors at international choreographic events. Douglas Nierras won first at the Saitama Choreography Competition in Japan. Seen by an international jury, Nierras' dancers (called Powerdance) distinguished themselves at the performance.

Hazel Sabas of Boulder, Colorado was cited as the best choreographer at the first Classical Choreography Competition in Paris by "Le Figaro's" critic Rene Sirvin. Ironically, she was not awarded any prize from among eight finalists. She said she is happy enough with the critics' praise and the international exposure. The dancers she

brought from Memphis Ballet (where she was ballet mistress and choreographer) were also well-lauded. Her entry piece, "Deconstructing Gershwin", will be staged by her for Ballet Manila in June.

The Japan Ballet Association is to hold its 7th competition for dancers in August. The biennial Asia Pacific International Ballet Competition has awarded prizes to several Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, Australians and New Zealanders. Members of the jury are drawn from these competitors' countries, including Singapore, Mongolia and Hong Kong. Leading them are Hiroshi Shimeda, president of the JBA, and Iwao Nagae as manager and executive director. Competitors are classified as juniors and seniors, rendering two classical solo variations and a contemporary piece of two minutes. Dancers from abroad are given free accommodation. Application may be sent to the Japan Ballet Association, No. 3 Namiki Bldg. 6f, 3-16-5 Shibuya, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0002. Deadline is on July 15.

Of recent interest were the visits of Dutch choreographer Jan Lenkins for the Cultural Center's summer dance workshop, and of Spanish dancer Cesc Gelabert performing an extended solo by German tanztheater choreographer Gerhard Bohner. Both were also involved in the NCCA national dance conference and workshop, and were presented by the Goethe Institut and Instituto Cervantes.

Meanwhile controversies regarding his own cultural appointments dogged President Joseph Ejercito Estrada. The legitimacy of the new board at the Cultural Center, headed by Gloria

Angara, was questioned by the former members, who cited the procedure as contrary to the center's charter. On the other hand, the latter's appointments by former President Fidel Ramos had expiry dates of December 1998.

Past CCP president Balthazar continues to hold office in a quarter of the building, while newly-appointed president Armita Rufino occupies Endirga's old office. Former artistic director Nestor Jardin has been replaced by Ramon Santos, composer and former dean of the College of

Music, University of the Philippines.

The same confusion was also initiated by President Estrada when he appointed Virgilio Almarino as executive director of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, replacing Carmen D. Padilla, who claims her post is safeguarded by civil service terms. She has filed a court case against Almarino and the current NCCA chairman Jaime C. Laya, whose own election is under the shadow of illegitimacy according to NCCA procedures, it is claimed in some quarters. Meanwhile President

Estrada has also proclaimed an order making the NCCA an overall coordinator and administrative agency for all national institutions, policies and cultural projects, including the CCP, etc.

Both CCP and the NCCA were the most active agencies in organizing and sponsoring the WDA-AP conference and festival last August that coincided with the centennial celebration of Philippine independence.

**Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz**



## Who Writes the World History of Dance?

*This paper was originally presented at the 1998 Philippine International Dance Festival and Conference, 3-9 August 1998. It later appeared in The Korean Journal of Dance Studies (Vol.2, Fall 1998) and is reproduced here by permission of the author and publisher.*

**Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz**

This paper simply aims to raise the question posed, and to imply how such history has been incomplete and inadequate, even presumptuous and imperious. It also intimates the problem of writing or publishing in Asia or the Philippines.

### 1. Who Writes?

To answer directly, the world dance history has been written by Westerners. With the triumph of the Western script and the success of the Gutenberg press, it

became inevitable that the Westerners would dominate in publishing. Moreover, with the present hegemony of the English language, world history is mostly written and marketed in that tongue of the global powers. My own personal education was nurtured in English so that it has also taken over not only my hand but also my heart. (This paper I can't respectfully write but in English.)

To begin with the venerable Curt Sachs (1937, translated by Bessie Schoenberg), he gave us scope within the expertise of the musicological and anthropological perspective of his time. Today we find his method inadequate, but he laid down the broad span in which the future of world dance history should be written. No matter how wanting by now, he did open our eyes to the diverse range and aspects of looking at and experiencing dance.

From him to Janet Adshead-Lansdale and June Layson (1983 and 1994), we are thrown into a wider perspective, examining dance not only for its aspects and forms, but also for linking it with various intellectual and societal studies. It has the humble honesty of calling itself *Dance History, An Introduction*. Yet one

wished that its sample readings acknowledged a wider range of dance practice, especially from Asia and the Pacific. Fortunately, Paul Spencer (1985) gives a larger spectrum, but his purpose is to serve a more specific (sociological, ethnological) perspective than that of the historical.

Although we now realize that we can't get further than the mainly Western and theatrical emphasis of Mary Clarke and Clement Crisp, when their *The History of Dance* (1981) came out, I eagerly looked forward to it. They did give all of 26 pages (some as full illustrations) to "Eastern Dance". To my disappointment, it never mentioned the Philippines. Before the book came out and while traveling to London, I gave Ms. Clarke a copy of Alejandro's expensive book in its colorful splendor. But she never made any reference to our islands.

(Femau Hall's picture-book on the dance world (1973 ed.) at least gave five paragraphs on the bayanihan and one full page of a reduced yet centered photograph of singkil with dancers Anido, Elejar and Ramos. Arnold Haskell's now antique *Ballet Annual* reviewed with photographs the Bayanihan appearance in London.)

These popular historians of dance still carry on a "colonizing gaze" so that they ever prioritize and emphasize the Western forms and practitioners. To most of them, dance in the East is mainly of the court or the folk so that later achievements and changes in Asian dance (including the theatrical) have not gone beyond the various rituals and wayangs, noh and kabuki, etc. Understandably, outside of a few anthropologists (who could be consulted), these popular authors do not travel to Asia extensively so that they are largely ignorant of what's happening here. (An exception is Jochen Schmidt of Germany. He has made possible special Asian issues of *Ballett International-Tanz Aktuell*).

But how we in the Philippines depend on these sample texts for our undergraduate courses! Do we have any choice? On Philippine dance, Reynaldo Alejandro (1978) and Leonor Orosa Goquinco (1980) are useful. But these are also not accessible, because they are either out of print or expensive as coffee-table books. One has to seek them in libraries, if these are there at all.

## II. Recognition

Speaking of periodicals, the so-called journalistic "bible" of the dance world, *Dance Magazine* of New York has restricted input on the Asia-Pacific scene, and

mostly for the magazine it's theatrical dance that's important. In fact, its annual awards has never honored any Asian practitioner all these years (since the award was instituted in 1954). Last year, 1997, it did honor Hernando Cortez (a Filipino-American) and his dancers responding to AIDS, because of the group's special concern but not for Cortez's own artistic merits. Moreover, Cortez has spent his life in the United States.

*Dance Australia's* first editor used to welcome news from Asia. Since my correspondence was last welcome, I have lost track of the magazine's coverage. Another big English dance press is of course in England. Except when Asians go to the realm, they are not interested in news from this side of the world except Australia, New Zealand and occasionally the former Commonwealth countries.

Serious historical, research and critical dance and theater journals from the West are also way beyond the means of Asian academicians and students. Thus they are hardly referred to or seen at all. Membership in dance societies (with publication privileges) are also pegged at Western income ratings. (Just look at how our WDA *Channels* is being processed at the most economical means.)

Recently, gratitude is due to Jack Anderson for unearthing (again) such names as Michio Itoh, Uday Shankar and a few more in *Art Without Boundaries* (1997), or Sally Banes about Sada Yacco (*Dancing Women*, 1998), but again perhaps because they have appeared in the West and are cited for their Western significance. Otherwise, they'd be blotted out, like all the other "modern dancers" who lived in the East.

## III. Asian/Philippine Problems

Dance histories have been written in the East, but many of these are not readable for Western writers or even to colonized Asians like me.

Catalogues of Asian publications (even from the English-speaking India, etc.) are hardly available to us and the rest of the world. The ASEAN monograph-project on member-country dances has not progressed beyond the submission of manuscripts and photographs since three to four years ago. (An ASEAN project on dance instruction on three dances per member country has been processed for video-film and textual documentation, but Malaysia has not submitted any material.)

The new and handsome Kasaysayan (1998) ten-volume set on Philippine history only solicited for two

pages on Philippine Dance. In contrast, the Japan Foundation profile on Philippine dance, together with all the other arts and on education (*Contemporary Philippine Culture*, 1998), accommodated ten pages of close text on dance in its 230-page volume.

Indeed, we ourselves fail to contribute scholarship to Philippine or Asian dance. With the rich and diverse repertoire of our people and the century-plus history of theatrical dance (since the zarzuela, opera, musicals and Maestro Appiani's troupe in the Spanish times), we still look back to the authority of Pigafetta to tell us about our ritual dances, or to Fr. Colin, or be happy with a few sketchy articles in magazines. (Most Filipino writers in general are not paid for their research. Should they get published, they are paid at a minimum, or their rights are taken away in a lump-sum which is usually small. Rights on sale are hardly monitored, nor are they always paid for.)

When we called for articles for the CCP *Encyclopedia of Philippine Art* (1994) we had a hard time getting writers for dance who are not only reliable (including meeting deadlines and for correct information), but also with comprehensive background and few biases. We ended with volume V on dance as the slimmest volume in the set of ten. (The encyclopedia will be available in CD-ROM by October.)

We love to regale ourselves and our guests with enactments and feasting with so many dances. But no serious writer aside from Alejandro, Orosa Goquingco or Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa has come to tell more about our choreographic story. (Alejandro's forthcoming book is also just satisfied with a picture-survey rather than with a serious text that is now rising like a dam in more informed Western dance scholarship.)

The lack of local enthusiasm for movement notation (Benesh and Laban which have been introduced by two practitioners here) proves further how illiterate the Philippine dance world is. This lack of interest also shows the little concern for exactness, for broad usefulness (into international exchange and study), for analytical study. And for a real sense of history.

#### IV. Final Questions

When this year the *International Encyclopedia of Dance* came out, I was unhappy about the fact that there was a token attempt to gain a broader input of the Philippines. Local experts were never consulted. Again, at the cost that six-volume set is marketed, it will hardly be available to Asian readers and students of dance. I

myself will have to save all of my net income at the university for four months to afford a complete set.

So, who writes Philippine dance history? So far, only one has done a book on it since 20 years ago, needing to be enlarged, enriched and updated.

Who writes the dance history of the world! Mostly the Westerners who write mostly about themselves and from their own colonial world-map or perspective.

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# INTER DANCE

## A selected overview of dance organisations in London, Paris and New York – January/February 1999

CHERYL STOCK

*This article is part of a report made to Ausdance by its National President on her return from overseas earlier this year. The information given and the topics discussed are of interest to the world of dance in general, and so it is included here – ed*

### Support Infrastructures for Dance UK

Two visits to dance organisations – Dance UK and Dance Services – revealed that Ausdance was in many ways both more developed and comprehensive than these two organisations, as they themselves generously acknowledged. Three programs of these organisations stand out. Although Australia's Safe Dance research is groundbreaking in many ways, the Healthier Dancer Program, one of the major services and information centres of Dance UK (mainly an advocacy and lobbying body) is an interesting model. Jessica Shenton, Healthier Dancer Officer, spoke of their extensive lecture and short course program delivered by a range of medical practitioners who specialize in dance related issues, both physical and psychological. I was impressed at those taking advantage of the service, from schools and colleges to independent artists and major ballet companies. Current research under this program is examining the effects of 'bullying' on dancers. When does encouraging and 'pushing' a student or dancer become bullying, what are the health implications, and the long-term behavioural patterns? We talked of the importance of sharing such research internationally so that we could all access the latest in the area of healthy dance practice and not replicate research.

Dance Services is a membership-based organisation and currently has 1200 members. The staff produce fact sheets for frequently asked information (as does Dance UK on a range of issues) and maintain a huge

national and international data base in which references are cross coded by country, key contacts, possible referral partners etc. In addition to their normal services there are five additional programs funded by the lottery commission, of which three result in choreographic seasons. However the two which seemed most lacking in Australia were the video resources and the feedback programs.

All artists who make work at any of the spaces in The Place complex can access a video team of freelance people who produce a two-camera live mix of all seasons and performances at The Place. The huge collection of videos as a result of this service and the growing number of unsolicited videos and gifts from companies and choreographers can be viewed by any member of the dance community in the video resources library. There is also a video copying service for members at very reasonable rates, as well as masterclasses on video for choreographers. In addition The Place produces an annual season of dance and film called 'Dance on Screen'.

With the changing infrastructure of dance in Australia there has recently been a great deal of discussion about setting up mentoring schemes to attempt to provide guidance and feedback to emerging artists who arguably were previously nurtured by small company structures of which there are now fewer. A similar dilemma exists in the UK and three variations of 'feedback schemes' are working well. 'Hothouse' is the mentoring program and consists of three or four choreographers working with a director. The most recent one, led by Victoria Marks, consisted of working intensively for ten days, with the choreographers bringing their own dancers, and a range of issues and problems they wished to explore. The process revolved around intense discussion, practical work and private studio time; its scheduling was fluid, artist-led, and unstructured.

'Talkback' is a program for choreographers/dancers where feedback is provided by more experienced choreographers/dancers, promoters, other artists, etc. The recipient drives the session and the feedback givers (usually two) are from diverse areas of the profession, thus providing feedback from different perspectives. A considerable amount of time is taken to match suitable feedback providers with recipients. Feedback providers are briefed and given written guidelines, and the artist runs the session.

'Online Reviews', is a new project in which 10-12 writers are recruited to review certain performances.

These diverse reviews get posted on The Place website and the choreographers and artists have right of reply to engage in an online dialogue.

All three forms of encouragement towards seeking constructive critical feedback and providing guidance for the professional development of emerging artists have led to a situation in the UK where many people now voluntarily include feedback mechanisms in their applications for funding.

### **France**

In Paris there seemed to be nothing along the lines of Ausdance or the above two UK organisations, but the newly established Centre National de Danse, set up by the French government, is a mega-amalgamation of four previously existing institutions: Maison des Compagnies et des Spectacles, Institut de Pedagogie et de Recherche Choregraphiques, Departement de Metiers et Departement du Developpement de la Culture Choregraphique. Centre National de Danse provides services and information to dancers and choreographers, and deals with dance patrimony, dance education and dance advocacy. The extent of their existing publications is impressive and is updated regularly with monographs and lists of resources on a range of issues from culturally specific dance to dance and technology, specific dance genres and philosophies as well as conceptual issues. As in other areas of dance in France the Centre is extremely well funded and staffed in comparison with most other countries.

An interesting position is occupied by Claire Verlet in Paris, as full-time director of Association Francaise d'Action Artistique (AFAA). AFAA is the cultural branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dealing with all cultural exchange programs in dance, both student and professional, abroad and in France.

### **New York**

There was no time to really delve into similar organisations in New York but meetings with Ruth Abrahams, who is President of World Dance Alliance (Americas Chapter) and Ilona Copen, Vice-President of WDA and Executive Director of the New York City Ballet Competition, revealed that there was in fact no cohesive and national service organisation for dance in the States. However as far as access to resources is concerned, New York's Performing Arts Collection of dance videos, books, clippings and programs held at the New York Public Library is astounding. My day there sped by as I glanced through some of the 790

resources in my relatively small area of research interest.

### **Training Issues**

It is no exaggeration to say that Australia's far sighted programs of dance education in schools and the development of dance competencies for teaching were the envy of all three countries visited. Service organisations, training institutions, schools, government departments and even choreographers were keen to have more details of our programs in this area and to receive copies of the relevant Ausdance publications.

In the last few years in the UK considerable effort has gone into redressing the inequitable situation of lack of vocational opportunities for professional dance training. There, as in France, dance degrees have a predominantly academic focus and although a small number of dancers have emerged from this sector, tertiary institutions are not considered a place of vocational training for dancers. The former piecemeal attitude to training is only recently being addressed in the UK.

France on the other hand has put a great deal of resources into vocational training for dancers and there are several models, though none are within the University system as in Australia. In fact one of the problems identified by several dance practitioners and bureaucrats in France was the schism between the academic and the vocational, the practice and the theory. For this reason they were interested in Australia's model of vocational training within the university system and particularly how it maintains its technical rigour, as well as the post-graduate model of artistic practice as/and research.

I spent an entire day at two of the four major élite training institutions for dance – the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse in Paris and a smaller Conservatoire in Lyon. One of the problems identified by Quentin Rouillier, the Director of the dance department at the Paris Conservatoire is the historical precedent of dance being subsumed as a minor discipline within music. Despite the huge increase in dance funding in France over the last two decades, this attitude still exists and is very difficult to overcome.

Training methods seem similar to those in Australia but the development and training of the 'thinking' and 'creative' dancer start much earlier. At the

Conservatoire dancers are trained full-time from the age of 13, and courses, whether specialising in classical ballet or contemporary dance, include improvisational and composition classes throughout the course. As a result, graduating dancers seem to have a confidence, maturity and range of skills and approaches by their late teens which most dancers in Australia do not acquire until their early twenties. The Director Quentin Rouillier stressed the importance of training the whole person in the dancer and of fostering an open attitude together with strong and versatile technique. Academic education is provided at a high school next door to the Conservatoire and students graduate not only with their dance diploma but with matriculation qualifications. The Paris Conservatoire has 150 dance students who study for six years, with the final year a bridging year in which graduating students form a performing ensemble of approximately 15 dancers. The ensemble presents seasons of new and established repertoire by guest choreographers, which are toured nationally and internationally, as well as involvement with cultural exchange programs. Previous exchanges have been with Barcelona, Taipei, Toronto and this year with Batsheva Dance Company in Israel. Extended placements with companies are also possible in the final year of training.

The model of the final year providing an ensemble performance environment is common in almost all the vocational training courses and seems to be very successful in providing a year of professional development and maturation. Of course such a model is very expensive and would be impossible to sustain in Australia's current funding climate for dance training.

### **France's National Dance Centres**

The most radical model of totally government-supported training was at Angers, which is also the first of the famous Centres Nationaux de la Danse Contemporaine which were set up from the late 70s to the late 80s with extremely generous funding and flexible briefs, resulting in the extraordinary dance explosion in France which took the world by surprise. The case of Angers is interesting for the Centre National de Danse Contemporaine d'Angers l'Esquisse was the first of the national centres, having been set up in 1978 together with France's first contemporary dance school. Since 1991 Marie-France Delieuvin has been director of the School with the permanent company in residence L'Esquisse, directed by Joelle Bouvier and Regis Obadia.

Currently the Centre has four main programs; the work of the company and the school, an ongoing program

of independent residencies, and a community and education program. The residencies called 'Quartiers Libres' can be up to several months providing national and international visiting companies or artists with a discrete building in which to live and work.

The relatively small city of 600,000 spends an estimated 14% of its budget on the arts (according to Thomas Hahn, (1996), 'Sturm & Drang', in *Ballett International/Tanz Aktuell*, Vol. 12, pp. 60-65), which is an extraordinary percentage, with dance as the central focus. There is an annual dance festival, and dance has its own designated theatre.

The school itself is unique in France. It has only two permanent staff with close links to the profession who as guest artists make up the backbone of the students' experience. The training, apart from ballet and contemporary dance, may include Butoh, African dance, Indian martial arts, voice training, yoga, anatomy etc. Improvisation is an important tool and students are introduced to a wide range of choreographic and technical forms and approaches which change according to the guest teachers and artists-in-residence. Only students who already have a solid training base are accepted, with initial intake each year limited to 20 students, half of whom are foreign and half French. Dancers are chosen for their potential to become 'dancer/interpreter/artists'. Deliberately eclectic, the aim of the school is to develop the personality, creativity, individuality and imagination of each student, and encourage an attitude of continual questioning, self-discovery and confidence in one's own contribution to the artistic process. The course consists of two periods of nine months over two years.

The emphasis in the second year (reduced to 12 dancers) is technical and artistic interpretation and research. The group operates more as an ensemble and the students, as well as creating their own work, perform in a program of commissioned works by three guest choreographers, also touring nationally and internationally. Graduates from this course are sought after throughout Europe due to their versatility and self-sufficient and creative approach, with the school boasting an almost full employment record of graduates. The work and approach is obviously influenced by the resident company L'Esquisse, whose work is a mixture of intense physicality and an abiding interest and work with film.

Similar courses exist in other parts of France and the National Dance Centres are the major focus of

professional dance activity. Spread throughout France they all boast a resident company, enviable local and national assistance and a range of resident and touring activities. Paris is of course home to a huge number of small project companies and independent artists who are well provided with new and technically sophisticated venues in which to perform, many of them out of the city centre in modern custom-built arts complexes in the suburbs.

#### **Britain's National Dance Agencies**

Unlike the French centres, which have a choreographic and performance focus around a resident company and sometimes school, the National Dance Agencies in the UK, of which there are eight, are predominantly information services and referral centres for dancers,

choreographers, teachers etc. They also offer short courses on subjects such as grant funding submissions, CVs, etc. However there is no prescribed structure for the Agencies as they have developed individually, reflecting the style and concerns of their region. Previously they were funded centrally from the Arts Council of England but now the money for them has been devolved to the appropriate regional centres. Some, like those at The Place in London and in Newcastle, are highly developed, and do in fact have resident companies and ongoing choreographic development programs and seasons. But compared with the generous funding in France, the UK is struggling to find appropriate support for many of its professional dance artists.

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**Check out the Ausdance website at: <http://www.ausdance.anu.edu.au/>  
Click on 'new updates' for information on the Australian Youth Dance Festival and some fabulous  
new illustrated pages on the current National Gallery of Australia exhibition  
'From Russia with Love'  
featuring original costumes, photographs and set designs from  
the Ballet Russes, 1909-1933**

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## **The Future of Professional Contemporary Dance in New Zealand – Funding for Failure**

*This article appeared in the DANZ newsletter and is  
reprinted here by permission*

**A**s an observer and practitioner of dance over the last 20 or so years (if you don't count my original training), and as this year marks the tenth anniversary of the death of LIMBS [New Zealand's major contemporary dance company], and as the often referred to Millennium is upon us, it seems timely to examine what the future direction of professional contemporary dance performance in New Zealand might look like. What can we learn from the last ten years?

I would like to stress that I am writing this as an individual, and as a supporter of dance in all its many forms, and the following is intended only as a starting point for debate, and not as a definitive answer to the many issues which face dance. Rather, my concern is for the protection and nurturing of past achievements, while retaining the ability to read the ever-shifting dynamics of present and future trends.

This can seem overwhelming and confusing, and I suspect most of us are so busy dealing with the latest "development" and with severely limited resources, that giving sufficient time to the consideration of the big picture is something of a luxury. However, given the present situation, I feel that this debate must be had – and using these pages to initiate the forum seems appropriate.

Because I was there, I am painfully aware of the drastic effect the closure of LIMBS had on the dancers, administration, board and wider dance community. However, the impact on the industry as a whole has taken longer to make itself felt, and it is only now that we are able to assess what the results have been. At the time, and after ten years of development, the company was trying hard to become a repertoire based company that represented the work of a number of different choreographers, and was undergoing something of an identity crisis. Eight dancers, an artistic director, a general manager, administrator and production

manager had full time employment. As well, company teachers, publicists, technicians, touring crew and designers were employed on a part time basis. Until the last year of its existence, the company also ran a successful school which employed a manager and a faculty of teachers. This is not intended as a rationale for the continuation of LIMBS, but simply as an indication of what was lost to us. The annual funding for the company was under threat due to mounting debts and falling audience numbers and it had become extremely difficult, if not impossible to make the sums add up! Morale was low- and I think it is fair to say, a significant number of people felt that it was time to move to a project based funding system which supported a number of choreographers on short term project grants, and to ditch the 'resources hungry' company. I should say that this attitude was prevalent both within and without the company, and at the time seemed entirely reasonable.

But I think this change in direction has placed severe limitations on both the long-term development of choreographers and dancers, and also on the industry as a whole. While many fine works have been made in the last 10 years, and I for one would not be without the enrichment of those works, the overall health of our professional environment has been undermined terribly. Where are the full time jobs for our outstanding contemporary dancers? Where are the next generation of choreographers allowed to cut their teeth? Who will guide and instruct arts administrators and publicists to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive and expensive environment? How do we generate national and international profile for contemporary dance without a 'flagship', and how do we lobby funding bodies and sponsors without the infrastructure of established institutions and databases to bring to bear? This is not to question the undoubted achievements of

Footnote Dance Company, The Auckland Dance Company, Black Grace and the many works made by Douglas Wright, Michael Parmenter, and Shona McCullagh (among others), both on their own project-funded companies and for the Royal New Zealand Ballet. But where are the resources now to even adequately archive that material? At the very least, our history should have its special place.

Projects are exhausting, costly, time consuming and difficult to sell, and it's becoming almost impossible to justify the cost of adequately funding projects that only have one life – there are not even any dedicated touring funds available! As well, it is increasingly difficult to resource projects with the appropriate administrative and marketing structures and staff to make them viable. The whole question of long-term audience development doesn't even rate in this deprived environment. How are we expecting to grow and survive?

I do not pretend to have solutions to these big issues, but I feel we have the responsibility to wrestle with them. With the departure of The Royal New Zealand Ballet funding to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the total funding dollar disbursed by Creative New Zealand for dance is severely diminished. The net result is that the overall 'importance' of the profession of contemporary dance is minimised in dollar terms. Unfortunately, this dollar-driven approach is really the benchmark against which all projects are assessed, and with an ever-decreasing pool to draw from, the inevitable harsh and seemingly arbitrary decisions are made. But is this really good enough? Are we prepared to let the situation continue and how can we affect a positive change for the better?

**Cath Cardiff**

**DANZ (Dance Aotearoa New Zealand) website is at: <http://www.danz.org.nz/>**

**AMANZ – Arts Medicine Aotearoa New Zealand**

Arts and health practitioners in New Zealand are working together towards better prevention and management of health issues. Their web site presents their quarterly newsletters and arts medicine related information.

Currently the site holds the three most recent newsletters (August and October 1998, February 1999), organisation information, and links of interest to arts/medicine involved practitioners.

Raewyn Whyte (webmaster for AMANZ)

This message came from the **NZ dance news mailing list**

List maintainer is Raewyn Whyte – [raewyn@url.co.nz](mailto:raewyn@url.co.nz)

**"A dance is worth 10,000 words" <http://url.co.nz/arts/dance.html>**

## WDA:AP MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**Eligibility:** Membership shall be open to all institutions and organizations and to all individuals interested in dance in Asia and the Pacific. Annual General Meetings (AGM) for members are normally held in July or August at the Asia Pacific Annual International Dance event.

**Benefits:**

- Members pay reduced rates for the AP Annual International Dance event
- Members receive a biannual calendar of major dance activities world wide.
- Members receive and may contribute to the Newsletter, AP 'Channels'.
- Members may participate in committees which contribute to the growth of dance in Asia and the Pacific

**Annual Membership dues for the World Dance Alliance: Asia Pacific are:**

Students/Senior citizens: US \$5 per year; Dance Professionals: US \$15 per year Organizations: US \$30 per year

The WDA:AP fiscal year is from 1 July to 30 June. National Chapters may also collect additional dues

Membership in WDA:Asia Pacific is applied for through the National Chapters. Contacts for current Chapters are listed on the inside back cover of *Asia Pacific Channels*.



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